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THE

CATHOLIC WEEKLY INSTRUCTOR;

Or, Miscellany of

RELIGIOUS, INSTRUCTIVE, AND ENTERTAINING KNOWLEDGE.

No. 47.—Vol. II. Saturday, November 22, 1845. {Price 1*d.* or, Stamped, 2*d.*

A. M. D. G.

THE ADOPTED SON

(From the German of Abbé Hagel Sperger.)

(Continued from page 544.)

CHAPTER VII.

THE RETURN.

If Edward in moments of distress sought consolation in prayer, from the other side of the atlantic also prayers not less pious recommended him to God. Margaret and Arnold never ceased talking of him, his name was ever on their lips, and every time an occasion offered, in which he might have displayed his affectionate heart, Arnold never failed to say with a sigh, "Ah, if our Edward were here." He had never forgotten the devotion which his adopted son had shown in preserving his life. Margaret counted the days since his departure, and though Edward had written several letters to say that he was well, and that all his business was succeeding, yet she was not without anxiety for him.

Late one evening, a messenger from the neighbouring town knocked at the door at Waldenburg, and told them a heavy chest had arrived from America by Hamburg, and that they should send for it the next day. This news caused the greatest joy, for they considered this chest as an announcement of the arrival of Edward. The next day Arnold drove into town with a cart, and took up the chest to bring it home. He could scarcely wait till he got to Waldenburg to open it. What was his surprise when he found in it a quantity of valuable and curious things, a letter and a bundle of bank bills payable at Hamburg, of the value of about £16,000. Edward explained in his letter, that he had considered it more prudent to send this sum before him, than to bring all the inheritance with him, lest if any accident might happen him all might be lost.

Arnold praised his prudence; nor could he refrain from tears as he read his letter, which breathed the most devoted attachment to his parents. "What a blessing heaven gave us in this child," said he; "happy the parents who are so happy as to have such children."—"Provided he arrives soon and safe," added Margaret; "how I long to see him. I don't think if he had to leave us now I should let him go." A month passed away from the arrival of the chest, and yet no Edward came. Rodolph was employed to exchange the bills, which were duly paid at Hamburg, and thus they had already got a good part of the inheritance. But notwithstanding this increase of fortune, they were not contented at Waldenburg, for Edward was wanting in the evenings round the fire. Twenty times a day old Margaret would mount to the top of the house, whence a good part of the road could be seen, to look if there were no sign of Edward; and every time she heard a knock she started from her chair, expecting to hear the voice of her beloved son.

However, reports of misfortune began to spread through the country. It was said that several vessels had been wrecked on the coast of Germany. We may imagine the distress of Arnold and all his family on hearing this melancholy news. Whilst they thus lamented for the virtuous Edward, he on his part found means to exercise his charity and show the goodness of his heart. The storm which had caused great destruction on the coast of Belgium and Holland, had forced the captain of the vessel on which Edward was, to put into Ostend. Edward determined to travel by land from Ostend to Waldenburg, and hired a carriage to travel more agreeably. He thus travelled through Belgium and the provinces on the Rhine, and arrived one evening in a neat little town, where he intended to pass the night. As the day was fine and it was not late, he shook off the dust of travel and went out to walk about, after having ordered supper for seven o'clock.

He walked about the town for some time, and at his return sat down before the inn under an oak that afforded shelter to those who came to drink a glass of beer and smoke a pipe in the cool of the evening. He was scarcely seated when he saw a blind old man approach, led by a little boy about six years old. They bowed to the company, and the old man began to sing. "What a sweet voice," exclaimed Edward, after listening some time. "What a pity he is blind; if he had been able to learn music, he could have earned a comfortable livelihood."

"That man excites my pity every time I see him," said a man who was sitting near Edward. "If you wish to hear his story I can tell it you; it is one of deep interest."—"I should be delighted to hear it,"

answered Edward, "for his appearance interests me much."

"I am the watchman of this town," answered the other, "the last 31st of December, I was beginning my rounds, when I passed the street in which is the house of the Mayor, who is considered the richest man in the country. There was a splendid party there that evening. The rooms were lit with a thousand lamps, and a splendid supper was on the table. They had determined to end the dying year with rejoicing, and begin the new in the midst of joy. I heard the laughter of the happy guests—I saw through the windows a multitude of servants attending on the banqueters; and I said to myself as I passed on, 'See the happy of this world, they rejoice whilst others suffer. How long will the just vengeance of God delay to punish the hard-hearted and inexorable man, who feasts whilst he abandons an only son to die of hunger?' In point of fact, Sir, what I tell you is as true as that God is in heaven. In one of the most wretched streets of the town, lay on his squalid death-bed at that very moment, the unfortunate young son of the Mayor. This young man who was the model of all the young men in the town, had fallen into disgrace with his father, by refusing to marry a very rich young lady, but who was frivolous, extravagant, vain, and of doubtful character. This refusal doubly enraged his father, as William (that was the young man's name) told him that he had chosen for the companion of his life, Anne, the daughter of a weaver, a poor, but pious, virtuous, and irreproachable girl. The Mayor drove his son from his house, and not being able to prevent his marriage with Anne, satisfied his rage in the most cruel way, by disinheriting the unfortunate William. The latter exhausted his strength in labouring to extricate himself from his difficulties. A year afterwards Anne bore him a son, the child you saw just now leading the blind man, his maternal grandfather. To complete his misfortune, the latter soon after lost his sight, and was rendered incapable of earning anything. Frequently did William throw himself at his father's feet, and beseech him to pardon him for the sake of his child, but he ever met with hard and unfeeling reproaches and refusals. This cruelty on the part of his father, joined to excessive toil and insufficient food, undermined the health of William, and a low fever brought him gradually to the tomb.

It was the last day of the year, at the moment when the happy guests were enjoying themselves at the Mayor's, that the angel of death came to call William to his last resting-place. Anne was seated by his bed, and wiped away the cold sweat which stood on the forehead of the dying man. William had during the day received all the succours of religion, and had generously pardoned his father. "Anne," said he faintly, "call our son and kneel by me, I will give you my last blessing." Anne sought the child who was asleep, and knelt with him by the bed-side of her dying husband. Her old blind father knelt beside her, and thus all three received his blessing. "Farewell," said William, "I am about to leave you, but it will be to meet again, never, never more to part. Men reject us, but God will receive us; for he knows our hearts. Live like good Christians, put your trust in him and he will aid you. God tries us for a time, but sooner or later he shows mercy to those whom he loves." He said little more, for his voice was faint and low, and he soon lay still and cold, and his spirit fled to the bosom of his Father and his God. The next day William was buried privately as a poor man, and his father did not appear at the funeral or put on mourning; a circumstance which disgusted all the town. He would never acknowledge his son's child, or give his widow any assistance. From that day the child often comes round with his grandfather, to receive the alms which the charitable bestow upon them. And I assure you all the town loves them. Such is their simple story."

"I thank you for having informed me of it," answered Edward, "I should like to see the poor man again to give him some little alms." The innkeeper who had heard these words sent a servant, who soon returned with the old man and the child. Edward gave them a ten pound note, telling them at the same time that their troubles were at an end, for he would take care of them as soon as he arrived at home, which in point of fact he did, for Arnold sent two hundred pound to the blind man to relieve his distress. This generosity of the young man excited every one's admiration; and as Edward did not wish to lose the value of his good action, he retired to his room to avoid their thanks and applause. Thus scattering benefits as he went, he arrived at Waldenburg. Arnold was at table, together with his wife and Celestina, who was come to pass a few days with them, when a carriage rolled up to the door. "It's Edward, It's Edward!" all exclaimed at once, and they ran to the door. "O my son," exclaimed Arnold, "do I see you again!" Edward threw himself into the arms of his parents and could hardly speak; tears of joy filled his eyes. As soon as the first congratulations were over, Edward gave his father an account of his proceedings in America. The sight of the different things which he had sent before him, and which were carefully displayed round the room, sufficiently told him that all had arrived safe. He spread out on the table a roll of bank bills, and delighted his old father with the clear and simple explanation which he gave of every thing. He produced all the accounts, and showed that he had acted in this delicate business with equal skill, prudence, and fidelity. The total of the fortune amounted to more than £40,000. a sum which surpassed all their expectations.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE REWARD.

The return of Edward had diffused a universal joy throughout the family, who rejoiced to see him again,

Old Arnold seemed to grow quite young again, now that his son was beside him. During Edward's absence, his father, desirous of perpetuating the memory of his having saved his life in the forest when he was about to fall beneath the two wild boars, had sent for a painter and ordered a picture representing the occurrence. This picture was to match that which Edward had himself painted. Great was the latter's astonishment one day on entering his father's room, to see this beautiful picture which was carefully encircled with a garland of ivy, like that he had formerly placed round his own picture. Arnold enjoyed the delight of his son, embraced him, and said, "Now that we are united, no more to part till death, tell me, my son, what do you wish, what reward will you have for all we owe you? I know that good actions are not to be repaid by gold, and that God alone can worthily recompense what he alone has inspired; yet man can show gratitude for benefits. Speak then, open your heart, and be sure beforehand that your wishes will be satisfied."

"Your love, my father, is my sweetest recompense," answered Edward, "you saved my life, you brought me up and had me educated; it is then I rather who am indebted to you than you to me."

"I have long seen the reward you deserve," said his mother, who was present, "you were given us on the very day Celestina was born. Heaven thus appears to have pointed out your destinies. Your hearts are made for each other, and thus you will be both our children." Arnold smiled at this proposition and looked at Edward, who, with his eyes fixed on the ground and a burning blush on his cheek, answered, "I am truly grateful, my good mother, for your kind proposition, but Celestina is a rich heiress, and I am a poor orphan; I could never dare to hope—" "Nay, your'e not poor Edward," interrupted Arnold, "half our fortune belongs to you."—"But," said Edward hesitating, "would Celestina consent."—"I'll answer for her," said Margaret. "Then," exclaimed Edward, "you have satisfied the dearest wish of my heart."

From that moment all was preparation for the marriage of Edward and Celestina. The tidings flew rapidly through Waldenburg, and great preparations were commenced to render the wedding a brilliant one. Old Arnold became young again, and took his rifle to go seek some game in the forest; but Edward would not allow him to expose himself to danger alone, so accompanied him. They both went out followed by two good dogs, and took the high road which led to the neighbouring town. Soon they arrived at the forest and placed themselves in ambush, but no game appeared. On a sudden they heard the crack of a whip and the roll of a carriage, an instant afterwards, piercing cries rent the air. Edward quitted his place, and said to Arnold, "Father, do you hear those cries? I think we should do well to go see what can be the matter, I fear some accident has happened."—"Yes, my son," replied the old man, "let us leave our game and go." Edward ran on before, and soon arrived at the spot whence the cries proceeded. He saw at the foot of a steep hill, a carriage overturned with one wheel broken; and near it a lady whom a servant maid was assisting; the driver also seemed wounded.

Edward ran up, laid aside his gun, and inquired what was the matter. The maid answered that the horses being terrified, had ran away in despite of the coachman and had upset the carriage; that her mistress complained much of her arm, but that it did not appear broken, and that the driver seemed the most injured. Whilst Edward sought to recall the lady to her senses, Arnold came up, who examined her arm, and declared that it was only slightly bruised, and that a few days' rest would perfectly restore her. He offered her his house, and lent her his arm to lean on as she walked towards it.

Edward in the meantime took charge of the driver, who appeared in some danger. In fine, by the care of Arnold and his son, every assistance was promptly afforded to the travellers. The lady was lodged in the best room of Arnold's house; and the surgeon who was sent for, declared that a few days' repose would recover her. She spent two days in her chamber, and the third she came down to see Arnold and Margaret in their sitting-room. After returning thanks for the kindness shown her, she examined the pictures which hung round the room, and when she came to that one which represented Edward in the Eagle's nest she started, turned pale, and the tears gushed from her eyes. Arnold, who perceived her emotion, asked the cause. "Alas!" said she, "I can hardly bear to tell you my misfortune. I am a wretched mother: God gave me an excellent husband, the Count of Boden; we possess a considerable fortune, and would be the happiest of mortals, but as something is ever wanting to our happiness here below, we have met with a heavy affliction. I gave birth to four children, three of whom died very young. I still possessed a son named Edward, a boy of most promising dispositions. He was three years old, when the physicians advised me to go to the baths to recreate myself a little, and restore my health which was very delicate. My husband set off at the same time on an embassy. In compliance with the advice of the physicians, I went to the baths with my son, a servant, and a maid. On Ascension Day, as the morning was lovely, I went out to take a stroll with Edward in a retired valley where I was very fond of walking. The child quitted my side for a few moments to gather some flowers, whilst I read some reflections on the mystery of the day. Suddenly I heard a cry, and starting up I saw an Eagle carrying off my child. I know not what further happened, for I lost all consciousness and fell senseless on the earth. When I recovered my senses, I found myself in a room of the inn where I was stopping. I afterwards learnt that my servants not seeing me return had gone to seek me, and had found me more dead than alive lying on the grass. I lay for fifteen days between death and life,

and when I recovered I hastened to leave a place connected with such melancholy ideas."—"And did you never hear any more of your child?" inquired Arnold. "No; at first no one sought him, as I was incapable of explaining what had happened, and seemed myself at the point of death; and when I recovered our inquiries were in vain."—"Is your husband still alive?"—"Yes, I am going to meet him," she answered, wiping away a tear. "Is it long," again inquired Arnold, "since this misfortune happened?"—"It was twenty-one years last May. I remember it as though it were yesterday. My poor Edward wore little white trowsers, red shoes, and a grey frock with a black belt."—"Then, madam," said Arnold solemnly, "prepare yourself for an unexpected joy. He who formerly preserved the three children in the fiery furnace, watched over your son and sent him a deliverer. Your Edward lives; it is he himself who painted that picture as a record of his danger and his deliverance. You will find in him the most virtuous, the most pious, the most amiable young man possible." The Countess had heard enough; she started up, uttered a cry of joy, called for Edward, laughed, cried, questioned, in a breath. One would have thought her mad, if the reason of this sudden change was not known. Edward had just entered the house with his intended on his arm, whom he was about to present to the lady and invite her to the marriage, which was to be celebrated the day but one after. He was called—he appeared before his mother, and when Arnold had explained the circumstances, the happy Countess threw herself npon his neck, and every heart was moved, and every eye filled with unbidden tears. Edward was soon taken aside by his mother, who having heard that a marriage was in progress, informed him of his birth and the rank of his father, and dexterously sought to discover whether it would not be possible to change his resolution. She pointed out to him, that being born of a distinguished family, he ought not to degrade himself by marrying the grand-daughter of a forester. That as he had not up to this time known his birth, his having determined on such a marriage was excusable; but that now all was changed, and that it was absolutely necessary to renounce this marriage.

Edward in a respectful but firm tone answered, that his resolution was irrevocably fixed, and that he would never marry any other than Celestina, who by her excellent qualities, deserved to be the wife of a king rather than of a simple Count; that as far as he was concerned, he was willing to renounce all his titles, and bear the name of Edward of the Eagle as he had formerly done; that the love of Celestina would replace everything else. "Besides," he added, "she whom you wish me to forget is not only highly accomplished, but she possesses a fortune of upwards of £40,000. And if she was willing to marry me, notwithstanding this inequality of condition, and give her hand to me who had not even a name, would it not be disgraceful to abandon her now, when I can take the title of Count and add some little fortune to her's? The Countess seemed moved by the reasons alleged by her son—her pride of family struggled with her maternal love; she feared by her opposition to render miserable that son whom heaven had just so miraculously restored to her. She yielded at length, stipulating only that the marriage should be deferred for a fortnight, to allow time for her husband the Count to arrive and take part in the ceremony. Edward made no objections as he also was impatient to see his father. He took his mother's hand and led her to the room where were assembled Arnold, Margaret, Mary the mother of Celestina, and Celestina herself; then taking his intended on his arm, he knelt with her before the Countess: "My mother, bless your children," said he; and the happy mother, raising her tearful eyes to heaven exclaimed, "My God, you took from me one child, you have returned me two. May they pass their days here below as happily as I have done, and may they at length attain to your eternal happiness in heaven. Shower down your choicest blessings on them, and ever protect them." And with a voice broken by sobs, old Arnold answered, "*Amen.*"

Edward then announced his mother's wish that the marriage should be deferred until the arrival of his father. To this every one cordially assented.

A fortnight afterwards, Waldenburg and the neighbouring country echoed with shouts of joy; Edward and Celestina entered the church together to receive the nuptial benediction. That day was the commencement of a most happy union, and heaven seemed to have rewarded their virtues, by bestowing on them the most signal favours during a long and happy life. U.

(Concluded.)

The abbot John of Thebes, as we read in the lives of the fathers of the desert, served with great diligence and affection for twelve years one of the old fathers who was sick; and although the father saw how long and how great a fatigue he endured, nevertheless he never said one kind or affectionate word to him, but always treated him with roughness. When, however, he came to the point of death, he called the good abbot to him, and taking him by the hand, said three times, "Abide with God;" and then he recommended him to the fathers of the monastery saying, "He is not a man, but an angel!

St. Francis of Sales was often reproved by his friends, because they did not approve of his manner of going on; they used to tell him that he ought to defend himself with more ardour from the calumnies of evilminded people, and to maintain his dignity: on which occasions he used to answer, that mildness ought to be the peculiar characteristic of bishops; and that, therefore, though the world of self-love might establish maxims of another kind, he at least would not adopt them, because they were contrary to those of Jesus Christ, to which he had always deemed it a glory to conform himself.

A certain devout man named Pascasius used to say, that for twenty years he had never begged of God any thing but humility, and even yet he had but little of it.

LINES ON A RUINOUS CHAPEL.

Few relics now are left of thee
Church of an ancient date!
Full many a ruin may we see,
But none more desolate.
Where, in old time, the prayer was heard,
Or anthem-note of praise,
The echo answers but the bird
Trilling her simple lays.

The fretted roof is gone, and bright
The sun streams o'er the gloom:
Meet emblem of Faith's cheering light
Shed on the darksome tomb.
Gone are proud mullion, cross and tower,
High arch, and stall, and screen;
Yet Age, with his own graceful dower,
Hath gifted the sad scene.

For where the carved work, quaint and rare,
Adorned the holy aisle,
The briar-rose weaves her garland fair,
And spring-buds gaily smile.
And where the storied pain its hues
To the gray pavement lent,
Sweet wall-flowers golden gleams diffuse
With azure hare-bell blent.

The dead all-unremembered sleep,
Their tale hath left no trace;
And Nature's tears alone may steep
Their grass-grown resting-place.
For where the moonlight palely gleams
On stone or ivy spray,
The diamond dews flash back the beams
As cold and pure as they.

The chancel's desecrated floor
Rings to no hallow'd tread;
The altar, where they knelt of yore,
Hath mouldered with the dead.
Each in his quiet grave they dwell,
Where never sound may come
To mar the stillness of that cell,
Their long-enduring home.

And keen-eyed Faith may visions view,
Revealed alone to her,—
Good angels, keeping vigil true
Around the sepulchre.
More precious than the cavern'd gem
The Christian dead shall rest;
For mighty words committed them
To the earth's tranquil breast.

And chastened Hope, and holy Fear,
And meek, calm, Patience, brood
O'er the deep-springing thoughts that here
Feed the soul's pensive mood.

The prayers of those who here have pray'd
In days long past, are o'er,—
In the cold grave those hands are laid,
To heav'n unprais'd of yore.

But not in vain the words, we trust,
Breathed from the contrite heart,
Though the lip blend with kindred dust,
And Earth reclaim her part:
Though the dark earth-stains e'er must cling
To man's best service-deed;
And poor his holiest offering,
Claiming no gracious meed.

Coldly on scenes like these we gaze
On fallen tombs and towers,
Then turn—nor deem that other days
Stern lessons teach to ours.
For, if this aged world be spared,
Ev'n thus will dull Decay,
O'er fanes where *we* have long repaired
Extend her ruthless sway.

Our fathers' graves—our own, will be
Forgotten,—one and all;
No tears of human sympathy
O'er their lost site will fall.
And in the aisles where *our* hearts still
In daily incense rise,
The spoiler's hand may work its will,
Nor dread their sanctities.

Or if a milder doom fall there,
And gentle Time, alone,
With his decaying finger, wear
Grey arch and crumbling stone.
His slow, sure hand shall leave, at length,
No record that may tell
Where erst arose the pride and strength
Of tower or pinnacle.

What matters it if earth possess
No trace where we have pray'd?
Where trembling lips their guilt confess,
Pleading the RANSOM paid;
Where the absolving word hath thrilled
Upon the list'ning ear,
And peace and love divine have stilled
The throbs of Sin and Fear;

Though Sacrilege may blast the scene,
Or Time make desolate,
There heaven's own gracious dew hath been—
The place is consecrate:
Each earnest prayer that lowly Faith
Beneath the shrine hath pour'd
Is treasured where decay nor death
May touch the sacred hoard!

As without faith it is impossible to please God, so without mildness it is impossible to please men, or to gain influence over them.—S. BERNARD.

THE KELP-GATHERER.

The stranger who wanders along the terrific masses of crag that overhang the green and foaming waters of the Atlantic, on the western coasts of Ireland, feels a melancholy interest excited in his mind, as he turns aside from the more impressive grandeurs of the scene, and gazes on the small stone heaps that are scattered over the moss on which he treads. They are the graves of the nameless few whose bodies have been from time to time ejected from the bosom of the ocean, and cast upon those lonely crags to startle the early fisherman with their ghastly and disfigured bulk. Here they meet, at the hands of the pitying mountaineers, the last offices of Christian charity—a grave in the nearest soft earth, with no other ceremonial than the humble peasant's prayer. Here they lie, uncoffined, unlamented, unclaimed by mourning friends, starting like sudden spectres of death from the depths of the ocean, to excite a wild fear, a passing thought of pity, a vain inquiry in the hamlet, and then sink into the earth in mystery and in silence, to be no more remembered on its surface.

The obscurity which envelopes the history of those unhappy strangers affords a subject to the speculative traveller, on which he may give free play to the wings of his imagination.

Few, indeed, can pass these deserted sepulchres without endeavouring for a moment to penetrate in fancy the darkness which enshrouds the fate of their mouldering tenants; without beholding the progress of the ruin that struck from beneath the voyager's feet, the firm and lofty fabric to which he had confidently trusted his existence, without hearing the shrieks of the despairing crew, and the stern and horrid burst of the roused up ocean, as it dealt the last stroke upon the groaning timbers of the wreck, and scattered the whole pile far and wide, in countless atoms, upon the boiling surface of the deep. And again, without turning in thought to the far-away homes, at which the tale of the wanderers was never told—to the pale young widow that dreamed herself still a wife, and lived on, from morn to morn, in the fever of a vain suspense—to the helpless parent, that still hoped for the offices of filial kindness from the hand that was now mouldering in a distant grave; and to the social fire-side, over whose evening pastimes the long silence of an absent friend had thrown a gloom, that the certainty of woe or gladness could never remove.

Among those nameless tombs, within the space of the last few years, the widow of a fisherman, named Reardon, was observed to spend a great portion of her time. Her husband had died young, perishing in a sudden storm, which swept his canoe from the coast side into the waste of sea beyond it; and his wife was left to inhabit a small cottage near the crags, and to support, by the labour of her hands, an only child, who was destined to inherit little more than the blessing, the virtue and the affections of his parent. The poor widow endeavoured to procure a subsistence for her boy and for herself, by gathering the kelp which was thrown upon the crags, and which was burned, for the purpose of manufacturing soap from its ashes; while the youth employed his yet unformed strength in tilling the small garden, that was confined by a quickset hedge, at their cottage side. They were fondly attached, and toiled incessantly to obtain the means of comfort, rather for each other than for themselves; but, with all their exertions, fortune left them in the rearward of her favour. The mother beheld, with a mother's agony, the youthful limbs and features of her boy exhibit the sickly effects of habitual privation, and habitual toil; while the son mourned to see the feebleness of a premature old age begin to steal upon the health and vigour of his parent.

In these difficulties, a prospect of certain advantage and probable good fortune, induced the young man to leave his mother and his native country for some years. The distresses and disturances which agitated that unhappy land, pressed so heavily upon the fortunes of many families of the middle, as well as the lower rank, that great numbers were found to embrace the opportunity of improvement, which the colonization of the new world held out for their advantage. Among those who emigrated, was the family under whom the Reardons held their little cottage; and with them it was, that the young man determined to try his fortune in a happier region. Having arranged their affairs so as to secure his widowed parent against absolute poverty, they separated with many tears, the mother blessing her son as she committed him to the guardianship of providence, and the son pledging himself to return to her assistance so soon as he had obtained the means of providing her the comforts necessary for her old age.

His success, though gradual, was complete. The blessings of the young Tobias fell upon the work of his hands, and his industry, because well directed, was productive, even beyond his expectations. Instead of lingering like many of his fellow-exiles in the sea-port towns, where they were detained by idleness and that open-mouthed folly, which persuades men that fortune may be found without the pain of seeking, young Reardon proceeded at once into the new settlements, where human industry is one of the most valuable and valued commodities. In a little time he was enabled to remit a considerable portion of his earnings to his poor mother, and continued, from time to time, to increase his contributions to her comfort, until at length the abundance of his prosperity was such, as to enable him to relinquish the pursuit of gain, and to fulfil the promise he had made at parting.

He did not return alone. With the full approbation of the poor widow, he had joined his fate to that of a young person in the settlement where he dwelt, whose dispositions where in every way analagous to his own, and who only excelled him in the superior ease and comfort of her circumstances. Previous to his return, he wrote to the poor widow to inform her, that in less than two months from that time, with the blessing of Providence, her daughter-in-law, her two grandchildren, and her son, would meet beneath the roof of her ancient dwelling.

Fancy, if you can, the anxiety with which the poor widow looked out for this long expected time. The assistance which the affectionate exile had been able to afford her, was such as to raise her to a state of comparative affluence in her neighbourhood, and to render her independent of the hard and servile toil by which she had been accustomed to gain a livelihood. Her cottage was wholly changed in its appearance, and had the honour of being frequently selected for a night's lodging by her landlord's agent, and other great men, who passed through that lonely district. A few flowers sprang up in her sally fringed garden, which were not the less tenderly cherished, that the seeds from which they grew were transmitted from the emigrant's garden in the other hemisphere. Her life up to the moment when she received this joyous letter, had been calmly and sadly happy. She looked forward with a serene feeling of mingled hope and resignation, to the day of her son's return, and never once suffered the eagerness of her affection to outstep her gratitude to Heaven, and her entire dependance upon the divine will.

But, forgive a mother's fondness!—There are few hearts in which the affections of the world and of nature are so entirely held under subjection by the strong hand of reason and faith, that they cannot be moved to a momentary forgetfulness of duty, by a sudden and startling occasion. After the widow had heard the letter read, in which her son announced his approaching return, the quiet of her life was for a time disturbed. She thought of heaven indeed, and prayed even more fervently than before; but the burning fever that possessed her heart, showed that its confidence was qualified.

In the hours of devotion, she often found her thoughts wandering, from that Being whose breath could still or trouble the surface of the ocean, far over the wide waters themselves, to meet the vessel that was flying to her with the tidings of bliss. She shuddered as she went morn after morn, to the cliff-head, and cast her eyes on the graves of the shipwrecked voyagers, which were scattered along the turf-mountain on which she trod. In the silence of the night, when she endevoured to drown her anxieties in sleep, imagination did but overact the part with which it had terrified her waking. Stormy seas and adverse winds—a ship straining against the blast, her deck covered with pale and affrighted faces, among which she seemed to detect those of her son, and of his family

—winds hissing through the creaking yards—and waves tossing their horrid heads aloft, and roaring for their prey. Such were the visions that beset the bed of the longing mother, and made the night ghastly to her eyes. When she lay awake, the rustling of a sudden wind among the green boughs at her window, make her start and sit erect in her bed; nor would she again return to rest until she had opened the little casement, and satisfied herself, by waving her hand abroad in the night air, that her alarm was occasioned by one of its fairest and most favourable motions. So indeed it was. The Almighty, as though to convince her how far she was from conjecturing aright the quarter from which calamity might visit her, bade the winds blow, during the whole of that period, in the manner which, had they been in her own keeping she would have desired. Her acquaintances and neighbours all seemed to share in the anxiety. The fishermen, after they had drawn up their canoes at evening, were careful, on their way homeward, to drop in at the widow Reardon's door, and let her know what vessels had entered the neighbouring river in the course of the day, or had appeared in the offing. She was constantly cheered with the assurance that fairer weather for a homeward bound ship, or more likely to continue, was never known before. Still, nevertheless, the poor woman's heart was not at peace, and the days and nights lagged along with an unaccustomed heaviness.

One night in particular, towards the end of the second month, appeared to linger so very strangely, that the widow thought the morn would never dawn. An unusual darkness seemed to brood over the world; and she lay awake, gazing with longing eyes toward the little window through which the sun's earliest rays were used to greet her in her waking.

On a sudden she heard voices outside the window. Alive to the slightest circumstance that was unusual, she arose, all dark as it was, threw on her simple dress in haste, and groped her way to the front door of the dwelling. She recognised the voice of a friendly neighbour, and opened the door, supposing that he might have some interesting intelligence to communicate. She judged correctly.

"Good news! good news! Mrs. Reardon; and I give you joy of them this morning. What will you give me for telling you who is in that small boat at the shore?"

"That small boat!—what?—where?"

"Below there ma'am, where I'm pointing my finger Don't you see them coming up the crag towards you?"

"I cannot—I cannot—it is so dark—" the widow replied, endeavouring to penetrate the gloom.

"Dark? And the broad sun shining down upon them this whole day!"

'Day! The Sun! O my Almighty Father, save me!"—

'What's the matter? Don't you see them ma'am?"

"See them?" the poor woman exclaimed, placing her hands on her eyes and shrieking aloud in her agony—"Oh! I shall never see him more!—I am dark and blind!"

The peasant started back and blessed himself. The next instant the poor widow was caught in the arms of her son.

"Where is she? My mother! O my darling mother, I am come back to you! Look! I have kept my word."

"She strove, with a sudden effort of self-restraint, to keep her misfortune secret, and wept without speaking, upon the neck of her long absent relative, who attributed her tears to an excess of happiness. But when he presented his young wife, and called her attention to the happy laughing faces and healthful cheeks of their children, the wandering of her eyes and the confusion of her manner left it no longer possible to retain the secret.

"My good, kind boy," said she, laying her hand heavily on his arm—"you are returned to my old arms once more, and I am grateful for it—but we cannot expect to have all we wish for in this world. O my poor boy, I can never see you—I can never see your children! I am blind."

The young man uttered a horrid and piercing cry, while he tossed his clenched hand above his head and stamped upon the earth in sudden anguish. "Blind! my mother?" he repeated—"O, heaven, is this the end of my toils and wishes! To come home and find her dark for ever! Is it for this I have prayed and laboured? Blind and dark! O my poor mother! Oh, heaven! O mother, mother!"

"Hold, now, my boy—where are you? What way is that for a Christian to talk? Come near me, and let me touch your hands.—Don't add to my sorrows, Richard, my child, by uttering a word against the will of Heaven.—Where are you? Come near me. Let me hear you say that you are resigned to this and all other visitations of the great Lord of all light. Say this, my child, and your virtue will be dearer to me than my eyes! Ah, my good Richard, you may be sure the Almighty never strikes us except it is for our sins, or for our good. I thought too much of you, my child, and the Lord saw that my heart was straying to the world again, and he has struck me for the happiness of both. Let me hear you say that you are satisfied. I can see your heart still, and that is dearer to me than your person. Let me see it as good and dutiful as I knew it before you left me.

The disapointed exile supported her in his arms.—"Well,—well—my poor mother," he said, "I am satisified. Since you are the chief sufferer and show no discontent, it would be too unreasonable that I should murmur. The will of Heaven be done!—but it is a bitter—stroke." Again he folded his dark parent to his bosom and wept aloud, while his wife retiring softly to a distance, hid her face in her cloak. Her children clung with fear and anxiety to her side, and gazed with affrighted faces upon the afflicted mother and son.

But they were not forgotten. After she had repeatedly embraced her recovered child, the good widow remembered her guests. She extended her arms towards that part of the room at which she heard the sobs and moanings of the younger mother. "Is that my daughter's voice?" she asked—"place her in my arms, Richard. Let me feel the mother of your children upon my bosom." The young woman flung herself into the embrace of her aged widow. "Young and fair, I am sure," the latter continued, passing her wasted fingers over the blooming cheek of the good American. "I can feel the roses upon this cheek, I am certain. But what are these?—Tears? My good child, you should dry our tears instead of adding to them. Where are your children? Let me see—ah! my heart—let me *feel* them, I mean—let me take them in my arms. My little angels! Oh! If I could only open my eyes for one moment to look upon you all—but for one little instant—I would close them again for the rest of my life, and think myself happy. If it had happened only one day—one hour after your arrival—but the will of Heaven be done! perhaps this moment, when we think ourselves most miserable, He is preparing for us some hidden blessing."

Once more the pious widow was correct in her conjecture. It is true, that day, which all hoped to be a day of rapture, was spent by the reunited family in tears and mourning. But Providence did not intend that creatures who had served him so faithfully, should be visited with more than a temporary sorrow, for a slight and unaccustomed transgression.

The news of the widow's misfortune spread rapidly through the country, and excited universal sympathy—for few refuse their commiseration to fellow-creature's sorrow—even of those who would accord a tardy and measured sympathy to his good fortune. Among those who heard with real pity the story of their distress, was a surgeon who resided in the neighbourhood, and who felt all that enthusiastic devotion to his art, which its high importance to the welfare of mankind was calculated to excite in a generous mind. This gentleman took an early opportunity of visiting the old widow when she was alone in the cottage. The simplicity with which she told her story, and the entire resignation which she expressed, interested and touched him deeply.

"It is not over with me yet, Sir," she concluded, "for still, when the family are talking around me, I forget that I am blind; and when I hear my son say something pleasant, I turn to see the smile upon his lips; and when the darkness reminds me of my loss, it seems as if I lost my sight over again!"

The surgeon discovered, on examination, that the blindness

was occasioned by a disease called cataract, which obscures, by an unhealthy secretion, the lucid brightness of the crystalline lens and obstructs the entrance of the rays of light. The improvements which modern practitioners have made in this science, render this disease, which was once held to be incurable, now comparatively easy of removal. The surgeon perceived at once by the condition of the eyes, that, by the abstraction of the injured lens, he could restore sight to the afflicted widow.

Unwilling, however, to excite her hopes too suddenly or prematurely, he began by asking her whether, for a chance of recovering the use of her eyes, she would submit to a little pain?

The poor woman replied, "that if he thought he could once more enable her to behold her child and his children, she would be content to undergo any pain which would not endanger her existence."

"Then," replied her visitor, "I may inform you, that I have the strongest reasons to believe that I can restore you to sight, provided you agree to place yourself at my disposal for a few days. I will provide you with an apartment in my house, and your family shall know nothing of it until the cure is effected."

The widow consented, and on that very evening the operation was performed. The pain was slight, and was endured by the patient without a murmer. For a few days after the surgeon insisted on her wearing a covering over her eyes until the wounds which he had found it necessary to inflict, had been perfectly healed.

One morning, after he had felt her pulse and made the necessary inquiries, he said, while he held the hand of the widow—

"I think we may now venture with safety to remove the covering. Compose yourself now, my good old friend, and suppress all emotion. Prepare your heart for the reception of a great happiness."

The poor woman clasped her hands firmly together, and moved her lips as if in prayer. At the same moment the covering fell from her brow, and the light burst in a joyous flood upon her soul. She sat for an instant bewildered and incapable of viewing any object with distinctness. The first on which her eyes reposed, was the figure of a young man bending his gaze with an intense and ecstatic fondness upon her, and with his arms outstretched as if to anticipate the recognition. The face, though changed and sunned since she had known it, was still familar to her. She started from her seat with a wild cry of joy, and cast herself upon the bosom of her son.

She embraced him repeatedly, then removed him to a distance, that she might have the opportunity of viewing him with greater distinctness—and again, with a burst of tears, flung herself upon his neck. Other voices, too, mingled with theirs. She beheld her daughter and their children waiting eagerly for her caress. She embraced them all, returning from each to each, and perusing their faces and persons as if she would never drink deep enough of the cup of rapture which her recovered sense afforded her. The beauty of the young mother—the fresh and rosy colour of the children—the glossy brightness of their hair—their smiles—their movements of joy—all afforded subjects for delight and admiration, such as she might never have experienced, had she never considered them in the light of blessings lost for life. The surgeon, who thought that the consciousness of a stranger's presence might impose a restraint upon the feelings of the patient and her friends, retired into a distant corner, where he beheld, not without tears, the scene of happiness which he had been made instrumental in conferring.

"Richard," said the widow, as she laid her hand upon her son's shoulder and looked into his eyes, "did I not judge aright, when I said, that when we thought ourselves the most miserable, the Almighty might have been preparing for us some hidden blessing? Were we in the right to murmur?"

The young man withdrew his arms from his mother, clasped them before him and bowed down his head in silence.

HORRORS OF WAR.

Few of those who boast so loudly of being ready to go to war are aware of its horrors, even aside from the destruction of human life by bullet, steel, and cannon shot. We saw enough of war in the city of Bahia, some years ago, to induce us to set our faces against it for ever. That city was long encompassed by sea and land by the forces of the power from which the Bahians sought to become independent. Haggard skeletons of starving women and children crowded the streets in search of food. The putrid carcasses of animals were dragged from the river and devoured. Every thing the human stomach was capable of receiving and digesting was swallowed to allay the gnawings of hunger, and it was rumoured and generally believed that mothers ate their dead infants. Hunger alike was in the palace of the rich man and in the mud hovel of the poor. Bahia was like a city of living skeletons. Some few vessels, not aware of the blockade, ran through it in the night time, and whatever of provisions they could spare where given to the people. It was a distressing sight to see a crowd of women, children, and old men, scarcely able to crawl made strong by the prospect of a little food, rush to the beach and into the water to meet the boat that contained it. They did not wait to cook it. Salt meat, cod-fish, and every thing else given them was eaten raw, and then as one person they fell upon their knees and implored blessings upon the heads of the donors. The rich would pay from five to ten dollars for a hard sea biscuit, and the poor would offer whatever they prized most dearly. Boats filled with starving women and their little ones would put off to the ship. One woman would hold up a picture of the patron saint of the family; another a silver cross, a third having nothing to part with, would hold up her death-like child, and together, in touching accents, they would cry "Food." The soldiers, under whose control the city was, only had a regular but scanty supply of rations. They seemed to have no sympathy for the starving inhabitants. The opposing armies, numbering each about eight thousand men, for a week had been alternately advancing and retreating, a few miles distant from the city, firing continually through the day without killing a dozen men, when one night, by some lucky chance they each advanced nearer to the other, so that at daybreak to avoid a battle was found impossible. It took place. The besiegers conqured the besieged army—entered the city, and we never saw such demonstrations of joy as the starving women and children made. They looked upon the conquerors rather as their deliverers from death by starvation, than their enemies. Women clasped the soldiers in their arms, and said to their little ones, "Now you shall have food—you will not die." We visited the field of battle the same evening, and oh God! what a scene was there presented! Dead and the dying—friend and foe, lay there together. Death on the battle field, however, seemed to us less horrible than death by famine in the city, which we had seen in all its horrors. The next morning after the battle the conquerors shot numbers of the prisoners within the walls of the navy yard. All this is the natural consequence of war, and this is what a parcel of wide-mouthed fools clamour after!—*Brooklyn Advertiser.*

TESTIMONY OF THOSE OUT OF THE CHURCH.—(No. 7.)

ON THE NECESSITY OF PROTESTANT REUNION WITH ROME.

In this paper we purpose supplying the shortcoming of our last, showing the necessity of Protestant reunion with the Catholic Church, even from Protestant authorities themselves. The point is an interesting one in itself, and farther interest attaches to it in consequence of several very great and good men, such as Bossuet, Grotius, &c., having made strenuous efforts to bring about this desirable reunion Hitherto all attemps have failed, and whether the project is ever to succeed is known only to Him, who is acquainted with the designs and the destinies of men. At all events it will be interesting to develop the opinions and feelings of Protestant writers on this subject.

Ranke, in his celebrated history of the Popes, has some curious remarks on this point. He says, "In private conversation James, I.'s expressions as to religion were very moderate. He said plainly to a prince of the house of Louaine, who once visited him with the privity of Paul V., that after all, there was but little difference between the two confessions; that he, to be sure, thought his own the best, and had embraced it from conviction, and not for reasons of state; but that he liked to hear the opinions of others; and as the convocation of a council was attended with insuperable difficulties, he wished there could be an assembly of learned men, who might try to effect a reconciliation; that if the Pope would set one step in advance, he was ready to set four to meet him; that he too acknowledged the authority of the fathers; that he esteemed Augustine above Luther, and St. Bernard more than Calvin; nay, that he saw in the Church of Rome, even in her actual state, the true church, the mother of all others, only that she stood in need of purification: he admitted, what indeed he would not say to a nuncio, but might confess to a friend and cousin, that the Pope was the head of the church, the supreme bishop: it was, he says, doing him great injustice to call him a heretic or a schismatic; a heretic he was not, for he believed what the Pope believed, only the Pope admitted some few articles of faith more than he; neither was he a schismatic, for he regarded the Pope as head of the church." Vol. 2, p. 496.

1. Melancthon, no small authority, in his Epistles, says, "We agree that the government of bishops in different churches, and the *presidency* of the Bishop of Rome over them all is a legal form, so that where other points agreed on, the Pope's supremacy might be easily allowed. The Pope's supremacy, he says, would tend much to preserve amongst different nations unity of doctrine."

2. The sentiments of the famous Grotius we find in the discussion of Rivetus' Apology, p. 255, and first Reply, p. 57. Grotius, he says, is clearly of opinion, as are many others, that Protestants will never be united with each other until they are with those who adhere to the see of Rome, without which no common agreement can be expected; he wishes, therefore, that the rupture now in existence, with the causes of it, were removed, amongst which the supremacy of the Pope *cannot* be reckoned, as Melancthon himself confesses, who even deems the supremacy absolutely necessary for the preservation of unity, neither is this placing the church at the Pope's feet; on the contrary, it would be only the *ancient* and respectable order of matters restored again."

We have no doubt that were the opinions of even Protestant clergymen canvassed at the present day, there would be found some hundreds perfectly ready to chime in with, and re-echo these sentiments of Grotius.

3. "Of the councils," says Thorndyke, "how many can be called general by number of the present votes? Their authority, then, must arise from their admission by the western churches; and what else can this be ascribed to, but the authority of the church of Rome, eminently involved above all the churches of the west."

Again: "In the troubles too between the east and west, though the western churches have acted by their representatives in great councils, yet, on other occasions they seem to have referred themselves to that church, resolving to regulate themselves by it, whereby it appears, that the western churches went always with Rome, which necessarily argues a singular *pre-eminence* in the church of Rome." Epilogue, Book 3, c. 20.

Again the same learned writer (Thorndyke) has another passage on this same point, which, if acted upon, would prove a short way of ending disputes, and terminating all controversy between the churches. Here it is: "Seeing it has been granted by the church of England, that there *is*, and *ever was, salvation* to be had in the church of Rome, as a true one; I am very confident that *no church can separate from the church of Rome*, but must make themselves schismatics before God." On Forbearance, p. 19.

Finally Thorndyke says in the following very extraordinary words: "It is out of love to the Reformation that I insist on such a principle as may serve to *reunite* us with the church of Rome; *being well assured* that we can never be united with ourselves otherwise; and that not only the Reformation, but our common christianity will be lost in the divisions which will never end otherwise." Epilogue, p. 33.

Such is the language of Thorndyke, once Protestant bishop of Bath and Wells. His words would seem to be prophetic; for not only is the Reformation in a great measure gone, but the common christianity, if we may judge from the present state of the Protestant church and universities, would seem to be almost on its last legs.

4. "Let the Roman Pontiff be actually primus episcoporum, the first of bishops, so he regard not the rest merely as vicars, and let him contain himself in the limits assigned by the ancient canons, then will a fair open be made for a peace universal," says Dr. Smith. De causis, &c., p. 196.

We may here give an extract or two from a very able little treatise, written by a Protestant clergyman, and entitled "An Essay towards a proposal for Catholic Communion." This little work deserves to be better known than it appears to be; it is a work of great learning and research. "I confess," says the author, "I was struck upon reflecting how far we Protestants come short of the beauty and glory of the primitive church. I observed the ancient church as one body throughout the world, wherein all the national churches were united. Then turning home, I sighed, and cried out to myself, Is not this a great blemish to our church, that we are in communion with no part of the christian world? That we are separated from all? That in our island, which is but an atom in comparison to the universe, we are not even united among ourselves, but have as many divisions as can be found in all Christendom besides? Here the love and zeal for that church in which I ever lived drew tears from me of compassion and grief; I could not but lament the narrow bounds of its communion."

With reference to a reunion the author says: "Inclination first led me to consider this with regard to all that dissent from us at home; but then reflecting that the unity I proposed was of a greater extent than the bounds of our island, and that the communion I desired, and most particular to Christianity, was not national only, but Catholic; hence I saw myself obliged to pass seas and examine the most considerable division from us; I mean whatever is in communion with the see of Rome; and upon a consideration of each party, I observed at length that popery was at the bottom of all; that this kept us divided from so many foreign churches abroad, and that the same was made the ground of our divisions at home: so that this being the true occasion of the narrowness of our communion, and of our standing divided from all christian churches, there could be no likelihood of our church being bettered, except there could be some accommodation found in this affair."

Our space is exhausted; we leave these authorities and extracts to tell their own tale, and "sum their count" to our readers.

THE LIFE OF GERARD MAJELLA.

Continued from page 528.

THE town of Melfi was also the theatre of the wonders which God enabled his servant to perform. Monseigneur Basta having heard of the wonders operated by Gerard in other places, wrote to the rector Fiocchi, requesting he might be sent for the Novena of St. Theodore.

All ranks came to visit him; curates and confessors consulted him on the direction of souls, and he replied to all questions with a wisdom rarely equalled. The conversions he effected were numerous; and even among those sunk in the lowest depths of vice. His penetration into the hearts of others was singularly evinced when, one morning, he was visited by a lady, who pretended to great sanctity, and frequented the society of persons remarkable for their piety, to talk with them. She was the penitent of a celebrated Augustine monk. Gerard listened to her in silence, and when she had done speaking, he said with a grave air, "My daughter, why do you try to impose upon me? For many a year you have made sacrilegious confessions and communions; and now you come to pass yourself off for a saint! Go, make a good confession, if you wish to escape damnation." Full of confusion, the lady went directly to her confessor; but, instead of declaring to him her hidden sin, she only told him what Brother Gerard had said, and how it had disturbed her conscience. The father was very angry with Gerard, and spoke against him to several persons. But remorse still haunted the conscience of the lady, and at length she went to another priest to whom she disclosed all, and gave him permission to tell the truth to her own director, and declare her gratitude to Brother Gerard.

To a gentleman who had lived in the commission of sacrilege he one day said, "My son, you are living in sin.—Are you content to die a reprobate? Confess your sins, and be restored to the grace of God." It was sufficient.

He also exercised the gift of prophecy while at Melfi. Father Michel de Michel then lived in the world, and was suffering from a dangerous illness. Gerard visited him, felt his pulse, and said, "What! you have fever—you are quite well;" and immediately he recovered. Soon after Gerard said to him, "You will be one of us by and bye." "That will happen when I can touch the heavens with my hand," replied Michel, who had a particular dislike to religious orders, and, above all, to the order of Redemptorists. Yet he lived to be a father in the congregation, notwithstanding many obstacles.

Monseigneur Amato afterwards called him to Cedogna, where many notorious scandals were grieving the good bishop.

He arrived at a time when an epidemic was ravaging the town, and was received, not as a man, but as an angel from heaven.

The brother of one of the canons had just received the last sacraments. They begged Gerard to visit him; and scarcely had the sick man seen him, when he cried out, "Praise the Lord."—"Yes," said Gerard, "let us rejoice in Him, for you are cured." The fever disappeared, and the sick man arose.

Another person, who had long been labouring under a disease of the nerves, which no doctor could cure, sent for him, confident of obtaining relief. He made the sign of the cross on the head of the patient. "Courage," said he, "rise, in the name of God, and come with me, and confess in the church." At that moment the cure was completed. The patient got up, went to church, confessed, and returned home in perfect health. The whole town was in commotion, because of this miracle.

He continued to visit the sick, preparing some for eternity, but healing the greater number. Among the multitudes to whom Gerard was useful, was a rich and powerful man who had long led a scandalous life. His poor wife, hearing of the brother's arrival, came weeping, and throwing herself at his feet begged his assistance in behalf of her husband. Gerard called for him, represented to him the enormity of his crimes, and the awful consequences that must attend them. His words, always powerful, produced an immediate effect, and this ravening wolf was instantly changed into a lamb. He made a retreat in one of their convents, and returned to his wife an altered man.

Another of the many proofs of his power over the human heart, and his knowledge of its inmost thoughts, occurred at the same time in the case of a lady of quality, who was passionately devoted to a person who was drawing her to the brink of a precipice. She confided her position to Gerard, who replied, "It is your own fault, Madam, you are not entirely faithful to Jesus Christ." He then pointed out to her how she secretly fomented her passion, and exhorted her to shut her heart against idle musings, and to have great courage. The truth was, the lady would, and she would not! But she admitted her want of precaution, followed the advice given her, and was saved.

The good brother had scarcely a moment to himself, so anxious were all to converse with him. The bishop himself, one of the most celebrated of his day, was wont to remark, "To talk with Gerard on spiritual and theological matters, is to become his scholar; and whoever enters into the house as his scholar, comes out a good theologian, so great are the lights to be acquired in his school."

Every one admired his profound recollection. At all times, and in all places, he kept himself in the continual presence of God. He was often seen in a sort of ecstasy, in an entire suspension from all exterior occupation, either drawn towards God himself, or trying to draw others.

The renown of his works made him be called to the town of Bisaccia. He found there a gentleman, who, immediately after his marriage, about a year before, had fallen into a state of idiocy, and seemed to be possessed by a devil. Many means had been tried, but ineffectually, to recover him. As soon as Gerard saw him, he said, "It is nothing, my friend, you are well enough;" and reciting some prayers over the head of the sufferer, he found himself perfectly cured.

In returning to Iliceto he passed by Morhetter, and converted a man who lived in a state of gross sin. Placing before him his most hidden sins, the man entered into himself, and afterwards became an exemplary Christian.

But if Gerard sought with ardour to reclaim sinners laden with crime, he at the same time delighted in the intercourse he enjoyed with two pure and innocent souls, the superiors of the convents of St. Saviour and St. Theresa. He kept up a constant intercourse with them by letter, and visited them when he could. To one of them he once wrote, "I desire to see you a Seraphim, burning with divine love, that you may enkindle that fire in the hearts of your daughters. Let us love our God, who alone deserves our love; and how can we live without loving such a God with our whole heart?"

Many well-born but poor young ladies applied to him for admission into one of these convents, and he always managed to collect among his friends sufficient to place them in those havens of rest, safe from the tempestuous waves of a stormy world.

On one occasion, he gave a rule for the good government of a convent at Ripacandida, from which all might draw a lesson. It ran as follows: "My dear mother Prioress, pardon me, for the love of Jesus and Mary, if I have delayed too long in sending you the rule which you have desired. First, my dear mother, since you occupy the place of God for your community, you ought to perform your own duty with the utmost exactness, if you would render yourself agreeable to your supreme Lord, who has chosen you to fill His place. Act with extreme prudence, conducting yourself in all things according to the spirit of Jesus Christ. You ought to possess great virtue, to give an example to your daughters, who should never have cause to complain of you. You ought to be as a pure vase, filled with all virtues, in order to communicate them to your inferiors, that, imitating their mother, they may all progress in virtue.

"A superior ought never to lose sight of her own unworthiness, of her natural tendency towards evil. Have, therefore, this fact always before your eyes, that God has elevated you to this rank entirely from His own goodness, since there are many others who could have acquitted themselves much better than you. Let your humility give you compassion for the faults of others. Fulfil your office with love, and do not dislike it as being too annoying. Think that God has prepared it for you from all eternity, and acquit yourself of its duties with an angelic perfection. Keep yourself always united to the divine will, and your charge without attaching yourself to it.

"In cases of difficulty, where you fear to decide, consult a person enlightened by God; but, the resolution once taken, propose to yourself the glory of God only, and execute it without human respect, should it cost you your life's blood. For love of God, you ought to despise your own honour. Say often to yourself, 'God wills that I should hold this place, and I wish in all things to do

His holy will. I must watch over my daughters—I must be the servant of all. My duty obliges me to advise, to instruct, to console, to satisfy all. I must always give the best to others, and reserve the worst for myself, with the intention of pleasing God: in short, I must suffer everything in order to imitate my divine spouse, Jesus Christ.'

"The thoughts of the superior ought to be always moving as a wheel, in order to provide for the wants of her daughters, each of whom she ought to love in God, and without any distinction. Knowing that her daughters cannot procure what is necessary for themselves, but according to holy obedience, she should entirely forget herself, and consecrate all her thoughts to their well-being. Whether she receive food or clothing, she should first provide for the wants of her children before helping herself.

"She ought to inspire confidence in all, especially in any one who might seem to be wanting in this respect, using all the means and prudence possible to gain their heart. She should be exteriorly affable, and the feelings of her heart ought to be conformed to her manners. If she acts otherwise, and neglects to show a maternal love towards those who are tempted, she will augment their disquietudes, so that, believing themselves despised, they may fall into despair, or, at least, cease to advance because of the thorn rankling in their hearts.

"She ought to join firmness to gentleness, in order to make herself obeyed, and punish with prudence the disobedient who will not listen to the voice of God. When correction is performed with gentleness, it leaves in the soul a tranquillity by the help of which the fault is recognized. We always gain more by gentleness than by harshness; for harshness occasions trouble, and leaves the mind a prey to obscurity and indolence; while gentleness produces peace and tranquillity, animating the soul to love God. If all superiors followed these rules, all the inferiors would become saints. It is want of prudence which causes trouble, and where trouble is, there the devil reigns, and where he reigns, God is not."

It is often the fate of the just to be falsely accused, and Gerard had to undergo this fate in a peculiarly trying manner. In a house where he was in the habit of lodging, when journeying from one place to another, a young girl resided, who allowed herself to be led into sin, and instigated by the real culprit, she accused Gerard of being the guilty person. She even carried her accusation to the ears of St. Alphonsus himself, and told her story so well, that he could not doubt its truth. Gerard was not impeccable, and Scripture itself recounts the fall of saints. They called him to Nocera, and pointed out to him the enormity of the crime of which he was accused; but, in imitation of his divine Master, he replied nothing. In consequence he was forbidden to approach the holy table, and was prevented from holding communication with any creature whatever. He submitted to all, without uttering a complaint, and his peace of mind remained undisturbed. Several persons insisted that he should justify himself, to whom he replied, "There is a God, this belongs to Him."

The calumny made a great sensation in the convent, but the joy that appeared on Gerard's countenance made a still greater. "My cause is thy cause," said Gerard to our Lord, "if thou wilt that I should be humbled, I embrace the humiliation, for thou also hast passed by this way." He redoubled his austerities, he deprived himself of sleep, and spent the greater part of the night in the open air, there contemplating in the firmament the power of God. He solaced his afflicted spirit by holy meditation; and the only rest he took was on the coffin which contained the precious remains of Father Sportelli. Nature rebelled, doubtless, but in the tumult of his passions, distrusting his own strength, he had recourse to the prayers of others. Pitying his calumniators, because of the miserable state of their souls, he offered his sufferings to God for them, beseeching him to open their eyes.

In these painful circumstances, his great affliction was not to see his character blackened among his brethren, as well as among those without, but it was to be deprived of holy communion. Yet he did not fail to conform his will to the will of God. When any one sympathised with him on this subject, he replied, "It is enough to have Him in my heart." One of the fathers once urged him to petition St. Alphonsus on this point. "No, no," said he, "it is good even to die under the weight of the divine will."

An intimate friendship subsisted between him and one of the fathers renowned for his sanctity. When he heard what had befallen Gerard, he wrote to him thus: "My dear Gerard, your letter gave me a twofold pleasure—you remember me in your prayers, and you keep yourself united to the will of God in this trial, which he has been pleased to send you. I beseech God, unworthy though I be, and our good mother Mary, to give you the strength of which you stand in need, that you may continue to conform yourself to his divine will, and to execute the good resolutions you have formed.

The silence of Gerard caused great doubts in the mind of St. Alphonsus. He sent him to Ciorani, in the hope that he might be inclined to place confidence in some of the fathers there, warning the Rector, Father Rossi, to watch his conduct very narrowly. But nothing was found to censure; he was always cheerful and serene, humble towards every body, and ready to obey at the slightest signal. What astonished every one most was, that he never uttered a single complaint. His leisure moments were either spent in the church before the blessed Sacrament, or in his own cell. After some time, he was recalled to Novera.

During this period he meditated continually on the divine attributes, and it was in this vast ocean that he quenched his thirst for holy communion. Being asked one day, how he could live without holy communion; he replied, "I recreate myself in the immensity of my God." He appeared to be always sunk in contemplation, and not unfrequently fell into ecstasies.

It was not until after two months, that his character was cleared by the same parties who had accused him. A grievous sickness overtook the guilty one; and in the tribunal of penance he was forced to undeceive St. Alphonsus, before he could receive absolution.

The joy was universal throughout the convent when the calumny was discovered, but Gerard preserved his calm amidst the general rejoicing, as he had done throughout the whole painful trial. Being asked by St. Alphonsus why he had not justified himself, he replied, "How could I, when the rule forbids us to excuse ourselves, and commands us to suffer in silence all sorts of mortifications?" Until this period St. Alphonsus had not known Gerard, who usually lived at Iliceto; but when Father Margotta came to Novera, and told of the extraordinary virtues of this holy brother, St. Alphonsus replied, "If he had no other virtues than those he has practised during this heavy affliction, it would have been sufficient to give me the highest idea of him." This same father being about to visit Naples, asked permission for Gerard to accompany him, which was immediately granted.

Naples was a new theatre for the virtues of Gerard. The remarkable beauty of this rich capital, far from dissipating his thoughts, only served to unite him more closely to God. His chief occupation was to visit the churches, and pass entire days in the contemplation of things divine. He always gave the preference to the church where the devotion of the forty hours was performed, Father Margotte accompanying him, and both often forgetting the time when they should have returned home.

Being one day in the shop of a merchant, who sold crucifixes, he no sooner saw them making them, than, full of love for Jesus Christ, he longed to learn the art. The artist being willing to instruct him, in a short time he became very expert in sculpture.

There seemed to be a holy emulation between him and the Father Margotta, as to who should crucify himself most. Neither of them thought of preparing food for themselves, and often they fasted the whole day. One day Father M. returned home, and enquired what there was for dinner. "Just what you ordered," said Gerard, "and that was nothing!" The only thing which grieved him, was to see himself surrounded by poor creatures whom he could not relieve. It happened once that another father came to visit them, and in Margotta's absence gave Gerard money to buy food. On his way he was accosted by a poor wretch who sold matches, and who was evidently in great want. Forgetting everything but the hunger of the beggar, he purchased his matches, and gave him all the money he had with him. The dinner hour arrived. "Bring the dinner," said the fathers; but Gerard only embraced them, and said, "Why are you anxious about eating? God is sufficient without anything else." "True," said the guest, "but we must eat nevertheless." They approached the table, and lo! nothing was seen but matches. "What is the meaning of this?" said they. "My dear fathers," he replied, "I confess I could not see the poor man from whom I bought these things dying of hunger without giving him all I had with me."

He frequented the hospitals, consoling and assisting the sick

and the dying. He was continually on the look out for sinners, and when he met any whose conscience was in a bad state, he never lost sight of them, until they were reconciled with God. His humble exterior often excited the laughter and derision of the mob, but his delight was to meet with such humiliations.

As Father Margotta took him with him wherever he went, he soon became known to the most eminent men of the day, who were filled with admiration at his rare virtues. The congregation of St. Philip de Neri and the Jesuit Fathers conceived the highest opinion of him. His supernatural gifts could not remain hid. It was soon noised through the town that this illiterate lay brother yielded to none in theological knowledge, and many persons came to put it to the proof, who were all compelled to acknowledge his superiority. On one occasion he was with a priest named Colella in the shop of a merchant who sold medals, rosaries, &c. This man pretended to great sanctity, and immediately turned the conversation on religious subjects. Gerard drew him aside, exposed to him the state of his conscience, recalling to his mind a grievous sin which he thought only God and himself knew. Colella remained in the shop after Gerard departed, when the merchant said, "The father who has just gone out must be a great servant of God." "He is so," replied the priest; and then the merchant confessed that he had discovered to him also a secret sin.

The fame of Gerard daily increased. Ecclesiastics of the highest rank came to visit him; ladies of quality were eager to have him at their houses. One morning, when he was alone in the house, he heard a knocking at the door, and on opening it, he found a servant with a message from the Duchess de Maddalon, requesting to see Brother Gerard. Perceiving that the servant did not know him, he said, "I cannot understand how people send after this brother, who is next thing to a fool; the Neapolitans are strangely deceived regarding him. Tell this to the duchess."

He detested those vagabonds, who pretending to be diseased or crippled, live on the charity of the public. One fellow who pretended to be lame, and walked on crutches with his leg bandaged up, he frequently warned to no purpose. At length, losing patience with him, he pulled off his bandages, saying, "Scoundrel that you are, if you would save your soul, cease to mock God and deceive men." The fellow instantly ran off, in his fright forgetting to take his crutches with him.

On leaving the house he usually passed through a certain street, where two bad women used to assail him with raillery and indecent language. One day, during the carnival, they began to dance round him with a tambourine in their hand, and at the same time shocking his ears by their speeches. Looking at them with grave sternness, he said, "If you will not give over, you will feel the chastisement of God." Scarcely had he spoken, when one of them dropped down in a fit, and was carried half dead into a neigbouring house.

Passing one day by a place called the fish pier, he saw a great crowd standing on the shore, who filled the air with cries and lamentations. A sudden storm had come on, which threatened to overwhelm a vessel that strove to gain the shore. Moved with compassion at seeing the danger of the poor men, and the cries of those who could give them no help, Gerard made the sign of the cross, threw his mantle across his shoulders, and rushing into the water, cried to the bark, "In the name of the most Holy Trinity, be still." He then caught hold of it, as if it had been a floating spar, and drew it on shore. It was in the presence of multitudes that this was done, who, at the sight of the prodigy, shouted, "A miracle, a miracle!" To avoid the applause of the crowd, Gerard immediately took to his heels, traversing streets and squares while the throng pursued him. At last he found refuge in the shop of an artisan of his acquaintance, where he remained concealed until night fall, as if he had been a criminal, and not a saint. Long after, when he was interrogated how the affair had happened, he laughed and said, "Oh, I just caught it with my two fingers, and drew it on shore." "I suppose," said Father Santorelli, "you threw yourself into the sea because you were warm." "Indeed," said Gerard (alluding to the ecstatic state so frequent with him), "I felt I could have flown in the air."

In consequence of this occurrence, he could no longer walk on the street without being pointed out as the lay brother who wrought miracles; and Father Margotta considering his position a dangerous one for humility, sent him back to his convent.

REFLECTIONS.

Days of my youth! ye have glided away,
Hairs of my youth! ye are frosted and gray;
Eyes of my youth! your keen sight is no more;
Cheeks of my youth! ye are furrowed all o'er;
Strength of my youth! all your vigour is gone;
Thoughts of my youth! your gay visions are flown.

Days of my youth! I wish not to recall;
Hairs of my youth! I'm content you should fall;
Eyes of my youth! ye much evil have seen;
Cheeks of my youth! bathed in tears have you been;
Thoughts of my youth! ye have led me astray;
Strength of my youth! why lament your decay?

Days of my age! you will shortly be past;
Pains of my age! yet awhile ye may last;
Joys of my age! in true wisdom delight;
Eyes of my age! be religion your light;
Thoughts of my age! dread not the cold sod;
Hopes of my age! be ye fixed on your God.

SUPERSTITION IN NORTHUMBERLAND.

To request a light on the morning of the new year is held, by those retentive of old scruples, as a most portentous omen. Several will not, for any consideration, even allow a *borrowed fire* to proceed from their dwellings. And to justify their firm persuasion, they will adduce such connections of premises and conclusion, as the following:—At a farm house, a careless servant, neglecting to perform the curfew duties to the fire on the old year's night, had to be obliged to her neighbours before it would kindle in the morning. Her master, apprised of the fatal omission, predicted some unforeseen evil would be the consequence; and, accordingly, some time after, two valuable cows perished—strangled at the stake! About A.D. 746, it appears from a letter of St. Boniface to Pope Zachary, condemnatory of the sanction given to pagan festivities, that "at Rome on New Year's Day, no one would suffer a neighbour to take fire out of her house, or any thing of iron, or lend any thing." Hospinian, *apud* Brand. Pop. Antq. 1. 9). Boniface has written epistles, and Zachary fulminated in vain as regards this practice in Northumberland, and we are informed, that the good dames in Lanarkshire, in Scotland, persist with equal pertinacity to oppose the long-recorded *dicta* and decrees of that illustrious diumvirate. Among the Celtic tribes, the great festival of *Bealtine* was annually celebrated with solemn pomp, at the vernal equinox—the commencement of their year. On that eventful eve the fires on every hearth throughout the land were quenched, and not until the lurid fire of Baal glared from the sacred mountain, were they permitted to be rekindled with fire derived exclusively from that pure flame, of which the Druids were the consecrated guardians. If an individual repaired not to the hallowed circle, but was indebted for a supply to the embers of his neighbour, the awful doom of excommunication awaited him—devotion to the undying element whose efficacy he had contemned. It might be that deeply fixed impressions of that night of bondage may have left traces that still endure in the superstitous dread of strange or *borrowed fire*. —*Local Historians' Table Book.*

"Take care lest you admit any suspicions into your mind, because they are the poison of friendship."—*St. Augustine.*

"Whenever you give any thing, mortify not with harsh words. A sweet word excels whatever you can give; it is above all your other presents."

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